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Introduction

Harold E. Albert

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Introduction

The constitution of South Carolina adopted in 1895 virtually made counties the wards of the state. From that time until the federally mandated reapportionment of the 1960's, state senators were chosen from the county as a whole with each county having one senator. Delegates to the lower house of the state legislature were chosen from districts within each county and there was great disparity between the populations of the districts. All of those elected from a given county were considered the legislative delegation from that county and either jointly or individually introduced legislation pertaining to the operation of government in their county. The senator from a given county could veto expenditures within the county and for all practical purposes "ran" the county.

The reapportionment cases forced the South Carolina legislature to reapportion on the basis of population. The Senate retained 46 senators as before, one senator for each of the 46 counties. However, senate district lines no longer corresponded to a single county's lines — smaller counties were grouped to form a single senatorial district. Districts for the lower house were drawn across county lines in order to achieve nearly equal populations per district. Thus, in several instances the "legislative delegation" of a county did not in fact come from that county.

Some of the more far-sighted members of the General Assembly perceived the developing problems and succeeded in having the General Assembly appoint a Constitutional Revision Committee in 1966. This committee's report was submitted in 1969 and became the basis for an Article by Article revision of the state constitution. Article VIII became known as the Home Rule Article, was submitted to the voters, and approved by them in 1973. After two years of bickering and compromising over the means of implementation of this Article, a Home Rule Act was adopted in 1975. It granted many powers formerly held by the state legislature (or certain parts of it) to the local governments and in essence provided for a new approach to local government in South Carolina — thus the title of these symposia.

Local government officials were faced with many situations for which there were no precedents or clear guidelines. It was in these circumstances that the idea was conceived to conduct a series of symposia at strategic locations around the state to explain the new law and call attention to both the new opportunities *and* the new responsibilities of local governments. Subsequently, a proposal for a series of one-day symposia was submitted to the State Personnel Division. This proposal

was approved, funds were made available under the Intergovernmental Personnel Act, and symposia were arranged in five locations to cover four topics. A deliberate effort was made to obtain speakers who had been directly involved in the development of the Home Rule Act or who would be directly involved in its application. Locations were: Florence; Point South; Greenville; Greenwood; and Columbia. Topics were: Constitutional changes; Legal ramifications; Fiscal aspects; and Political considerations. Gratitude is expressed to Lieutenant Governor Brantley Harvey for giving the luncheon address at two of the symposia, and to Representative Henry Floyd for delivering it at the other three.

Sponsorship of the symposia included the South Carolina Municipal Association, the South Carolina Association of Counties, the State Personnel Division, and the Department of Political Science of Clemson University. Each topic was covered at each location. The comments of each speaker are edited and arranged under the topic under which he spoke.

Harold E. Albert
Associate Professor,
Political Science,
Clemson University